

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 03938 230158Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-01 SY-05 OPR-02 A-01
OC-06 CCO-00 EUR-12 FBIE-00 /077 W
-----010152 230204Z /65

O R 222356Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5261
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 3938

FOR ARA/CEN OPENING BUSINESS TUESDAY AM

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, ES
SUBJ: ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON WEEKEND TERRORIST ACTIVITIES

REF: SAN SALVADOR 3918

1. LOCAL PRESS HEADLINED THE EARLY SUNDAY MORNING BOMBINGS
THROUGHOUT EL SALVADOR AND GAVE EXTENSIVE PICTORIAL COVERAGE
TO DAMAGE INFLICTED. POLICE REPORT TOTAL OF 35 BOMBS PLACED,
AUGUST 21, WITH 27 EXPLODING (SEE REFTEL). SIX BOMBS REPORTED
IN SAN SALVADOR, REMAINING 21 IN OTHER MAJOR CITIES AND TOWNS
OF EL SALVADOR. DAMAGE SOMEWHAT MORE EXTENSIVE THAN ORIGINALLY
BELIEVED, BUT STILL APPEARS THAT TERRORISTS DID NOT INTEND
TO UNDERTAKE MAJOR DESTRUCTIVE OPERATION OR HARM PEOPLE. THE
WELL COORDINATED COUNTRYWIDE BOMBING ACTION APPARENTLY UNDER-
TAKEN FOR PUBLICITY VALUE AND AS REMINDER AND/OR WARNING TO GOES
OF TERRORIST POTENTIAL. ONLY INJURIES REPORTED WERE TO THREE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SAN SA 03938 230158Z

ADULTS AND THREE CHILDREN IN ZACATECOLUCA WHERE WOMEN
RETURNING FROM MARKET IN EARLY MORNING PICKED UP SMALL PACKAGE
IN FRONT OF OFFICES OF COMPANIA GENERAL DE SEGURO AND TOOK IT
HOME. THE PACKAGE EXPLODED SHORTLY THEREAFTER IN HER HOME.
NONE OF THE SIX PERSONS SERIOUSLY INJURED.

2. NEWSPAPERS REPORTED ONE OF THREE SUSPECTED TERRORISTS

SEEN LEAVING THE TOURIST INSTITUTE (ISTU) AS BOMB EXPLODED. MAY HAVE BEEN WOUNDED BY ISTU GUARD. PRESS ALSO STATES THAT SUSPECT HAS BEEN CAPTURED IN SANTA TECLA.

3. CHARGE DISCUSSED GOES REACTION TO BOMBINGS WITH VICE PRESIDENT ASTACIO MORNING OF AUGUST 22. ASTACIO STATED THAT INITIAL REACTION OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF GOES WAS TO CONDUCT NATIONWIDE CRACKDOWN ON ALL TERRORIST GROUPS AND PERSONNEL. IT WAS FELT, HOWEVER, THIS PROBABLY WOULD BE THE REACTION TERRORIST GROUPS HOPED TO INITIATE. HE SAID THAT GOES DOES HAVE ONE SUSPECT IN CUSTODY AND OTHER CLUES PERTAINING TO PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR BOMBINGS. ACCORDING TO ASTACIO, GOES NOW INTENDS TO PURSUE INVESTIGATION IN NORMAL FASHION AND HOPES TO APPREHEND PERPETRATORS WITH PURPOSE OF PROSECUTING THEM FOR CRIMINAL ACTION.

4. VICE PRESIDENT ALSO TOOK OPPORTUNITY OF CHARGE VISIT TO GIVE CHARGE COMPLETE SET OF DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO THE KIDNAPPING AND RELEASE OF DR. CARLOS EMELIO ALVAREZ BY THE ARMED FORCES OF NATIONAL RESISTANCE (FARN), GOES HAD RECEIVED FROM FAMILY. FIRST LETTER FROM FARN DATED AUGUST 12, THE DAY FOLLOWING THE KIDNAPPING, WAS ADDRESSED TO MIGUEL ANGEL PINTO, DIRECTOR OF EL DAIRIO LATINO REQUESTING THAT HE DELIVER LETTER TO ALVAREZ FAMILY WITHOUT INFORMING ANYONE OR GIVING PUBLICITY TO ITS RECEIPT. THE LETTER DEMANDED A RANSOM OF 2 MILLION COLONES (US \$800,000) FOR THE RELEASE OF DR. ALVAREZ. THE LETTER STATED THAT THE MONEY WOULD BE USED BY THE FARN TO CARRY OUT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAN SA 03938 230158Z

THEIR STRUGGLE AGAINST THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. IT ALSO SPECIFIED IN GREAT DETAIL THE DENOMINATION OF THE BILLS REQUESTED AND THE METHOD OF DELIVERY WHICH WAS TO BE THROUGH PINTO. THEY WARNED AGAINST NOTIFYING GOES OFFICIALS AND SAID THAT ALVAREZ WOULD BE KILLED IMMEDIATELY IF THE MONEY WAS NOT RECEIVED. THE LETTER INCLUDED A HANDWRITTEN NOTE FROM DR. ALVAREZ REQUESTING THAT HIS FAMILY COMPLY WITH THE DEMAND. ON AUGUST 16 ANOTHER LETTER WAS SENT TO PINTO FOR DELIVERY TO THE ALVAREZ FAMILY SETTING FORTH TWO ADDITIONAL DEMANDS. THE FIRST WAS PUBLICATION IN THE FOUR MAJOR NEWSPAPERS OF SAN SALVADOR OF THE MANIFESTO OF THE FARN (REPORTED REFTTEL) AGAIN THE LETTER WAS VERY SPECIFIC IN STATING THE NAMES OF THE NEWSPAPERS, THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE TITLE OF THE MANIFESTO BE PRINTED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF EACH PAPER AND THAT THE DOCUMENT BE PUBLISHED IN ITS ENTIRETY WITH NO CHANGES. THE SECOND DEMAND WAS FOR THE RELEASE OF 5 POLITICAL PRISONERS. THE ALLEGED PRISONERS (TWO OF WHOM WERE NOT NAMED BUT CITED AS BEING CAPTURED IN NOVEMBER 1976) WERE TO BE DELIVERED TO THE MEXICAN EMBASSY IN EL SALVADOR AND FROM THERE TAKEN TO MEXICO AND TURNED OVER TO THE CUBAN EMBASSY IN MEXICO, FOR FURTHER DELIVERY TO CUBA. VICE PRESIDENT ASTACIO CONFIRMED TO THE CHARGE THAT THE RANSOM PAYMENT WAS MADE AND THE MANIFESTO PUBLISHED AS REQUESTED. HE STATED THAT THE ALLEGED POLITICAL

PRISONERS WERE FICTITIOUS AND THAT WHEN THE FIRST TWO DEMANDS WERE MET, DR ALVAREZ WAS RELEASED UNHARMED. ALVAREZ AND SEVERAL MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY FLEW TO GUATEMALA BY PRIVATE PLANE ON AUGUST 20 AND FROM THERE TO MIAMI THE SAME DAY.

5. THE RECENT INCREASED ACTIVITY OF TERRORIST GROUPS, COMBINED WITH, THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES NOW AVAILABLE TO THEM, TEND TO LEND CREDENCE TO THE GROWING CONCERN OF THE GOES EXPRESSED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT THAT SOME MAJOR TERRORIST ACTION DURING THE VISIT OF THE KING OF SPAIN IS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY.
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Sent Date: 22-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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